



BRECHLEY AND MATFIELD PARISH COUNCIL
Matfield Pavilion, The Green, Matfield, Kent, TN12 7JU
Tel: 01892 723586 www.brenchleyandmatfield-pc.gov.uk

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF BRECHLEY AND MATFIELD PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON MONDAY 3rd JUNE 2024, AT 7PM AT MATFIELD PAVILION

Present: Councillors J. Buttery (Chair) presided, A. Dewdney, C. Anderson, E Akenhead, C. Churchill, J. Reynolds, C. Brooks (Clerk)

In attendance: Cllr Tom Mobbs (TWBC) (part), 3 members of the public

1. To accept apologies for absence

None.

2. To approve Minutes of the last meeting

Minutes of the meeting of the Annual Meeting of 13th May were approved as an accurate record and were duly signed by the Chairman.

3. To record declarations of interest in any item on the Agenda

None.

4. To adjourn to allow public participation.

John Barsley requested that the Council acknowledge the contribution of Cliff Forward, over many years, in providing the wood used to light the Beacon

Action Clerk

5. Borough and County Councillor

Cllr Mobbs gave a brief update regarding the composition of the new Borough Council following elections.

6. Chairman's Announcements

- Cllr Buttery confirmed that a meeting with Carlos Hone, Head of Planning at TWBC, is planned for 17th June to discuss the Parish Neighbourhood Development Plan in relation to Planning Decisions made by TWBC.
- Matfield Fete is on 13th July and Cllrs were reminded that a rota would be circulated to cover manning PC stand between 12 noon and 5pm. It was agreed that a stand at the Brenchley Fair next year would be considered.

7. D-Day event – to review risk assessment

Councillors reviewed and noted the Risk Assessment for the event.

8. Traffic – update re Standings Cross

The Council noted the responses from Nigel Rowe on the options following the accident near The Poet and that the details of the Pedestrian Count Survey were awaited and some of the information on the ATC data sent was unclear. Cllr Churchill expressed frustration at the lack of progress on some of the previously agreed items such as the Children in the Road sign on Brenchley Road and actions around the School and would take these up with Emma Tilbury, Nigel Rowe's superior.

Action Cllr Churchill

9. Planning

1. Planning Applications

24/01111/FULL Crittenden House, Crittenden Road, Matfield, TN12 7EN	New dwelling to replace disused barn (amendment to 21/02470/FULL) RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND: NEUTRAL If TWBC is minded to approve, similar conditions should be applied to this application as were imposed on 21/02470/FULL, including the requirement to demolish the existing barns, and also a new condition should be added requiring electrically operated blinds on the conservation rooflights in order to comply with Policy LE8 of the Brenchley and Matfield Neighbourhood Development Plan.
24/01137/FULL Oaklands, Bramble Reed Lane, Matfield, Kent, TN12 7ET	Two-storey infill side extensions, single-storey rear extension, alterations to fenestration on all elevations, replacement garage RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND: APPROVE However, in order to comply with Policy LE8 of the Brenchley and Matfield Neighbourhood Development Plan, the Parish Council requests a condition to control exterior lighting.
24/01208/FULL 3 Chestnut Lane, Matfield, Kent, TN12 7JJ	Demolition and erection of a replacement dwelling. RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND: APPROVE The proposal would comply with policies H2, H3, H4, H5, D4 and D6 of the Brenchley and Matfield Neighbourhood Development Plan. It would however conflict with Policy LE8 unless the array of large plate glass windows and the rooflights are equipped with electrically operated blinds or shutters, so the parish council requests a condition concerning this. To ensure that the parking area, tree protection, landscaping, water and energy sustainability measures are implemented, either the Design and Access Statement should be listed among the approved plans, or suitable conditions should be imposed to control these aspects of the development.
24/01249/NMAMD Thorn Barn, Maidstone Road, Matfield, Kent	Non-Material Amendment in relation to 23/01314/FULL - Adjustments to plot 2 & 3 parking bays RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND: REFUSE The proposed new tandem parking arrangement would push the parking bays to the edge of the plot and affect the important hedge screening the development from Maidstone Road. The substitution of Proposed Site Block Plan - 230905 - A-PL-002 for the approved Proposed Roof Plan - 20024-P-201 would mean that no EV charging points are shown. The visitor parking space that was shown in the previously approved 24/00164/SUB 20024-P-200G Proposed site plan appears to be allocated instead to Plot 1. Policy AM3 of the Brenchley and Matfield Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) states that residential developments should satisfy the minimum parking standards set out in the Guidance table in Figure 32. This requires one visitor parking space to be provided for a 5 unit development. It would be unacceptable, in this location so close to the crossroads and to the parking

	stress area on Maidstone Road shown in figure 31 of the NDP, for a development of 5 units to have no visitor parking, which would result in visitors and tradesmen parking on the streets, adding to the parking stress and traffic congestion there. In the original approved plans there was provision for a refuse pick up point on the access road. This is no longer shown on any recent plans and if the new refuse collection strategy is for the refuse truck to fully enter into the site and turn within it, then the developer should provide a sweep analysis for a refuse truck with this new parking formation which extends further than previously into the turning area. The Parish Council has made clear in our many responses that, for safety reasons, we do not wish to see the refuse bins for 7 households put out on Brenchley Road on collection days. Clearly the proposed changes to the previously approved plans should not be considered a non-material amendment.
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2. Delegated response submitted re 24/01214/AGRREQ – to note

Councillors noted comments submitted:

24/01214/AGRREQ Great Coldharbour Farm, Cuckoo Lane, Brenchley, Tonbridge, Kent TN12 7HX	Prior Notification of agricultural development – Proposed Agricultural Barn RECOMMENDATION: REFUSE The Parish Council considers that the applicant has not provided evidence that a new barn on this site is necessary for agriculture, other than a potential increase in insurance premiums if the building were to be constructed closer to the existing farm buildings a short distance down Cuckoo Lane. The applicant does not set out the extent to which its insurance premiums would increase. The erection of a new building and access track in this location away from the main farmstead would damage this relatively remote and undeveloped part of the High Weald National Landscape. The field concerned has been identified in research commissioned by the High Weald AONB unit as part of a medieval field system and great weight should be given to its conservation. The Parish Council notes that the applicant's agent is called Housing Solutions and carries the strapline "better homes by design", which suggests that the purpose of the building may not in fact be agricultural. The eight proposed skylights also suggest that its purpose may not be agricultural, since skylights should not be necessary for the storage of hay in an open-fronted building. If, however, TWBC nevertheless considers that the proposed building should qualify as permitted development, then clearly in view of the sensitivity of the historic landscape, attention must be given to the siting, design and external appearance of the building and the siting and means of construction of the access road and turning area.
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3. Local Plan Stage 3 Hearings – to consider additional statements

The Council noted that following receipt of the Inspector's Initial Findings in November 2022, and subsequent consideration of these, TWBC carried out a public consultation on its response to the initial findings which ended on 12 April 2024.

Two representatives from Brenchley and Matfield Parish Council have been registered to attend for hearing sessions on Matter 4, The Strategy for Paddock Wood (presently scheduled for Hearing Day 4, Tuesday 16 July, morning and afternoon) and Matter 7, Highways Infrastructure (presently scheduled for the morning of Hearing Day 5, Wednesday 17 July).

It was agreed that, unless relevant matters came to light, no further written statements may be necessary.

10. Financial Regulations – to consider adoption

The Clerk outlined that there has been a new NALC model version of the financial regulations and the RFO had compiled a new draft version with the various non-statutory items (those which BMPC can amend to suit) listed for review. It was agreed that this would be reviewed by the Finance Committee for their recommendations and that therefore the current Financial Regulations would remain in place.

11. Projects

1. Brenchley Recreation Ground Playground - update

The Council received the Post Installation Inspection Report and noted that small snagging items are being completed on 17th June.

Cllr Anderson raised a request for a “mud kitchen” in the area at the bottom of the site and was asked to provide some costed ideas as well as for an outdoor table tennis table given the acknowledged concern that teenage children were currently not catered for.

Action Cllr Anderson

2. Pond – quarterly report

Council noted an update from Richard Groves, advising that more dye had been added, some reeds replanted and that work on the area by the Hammonds corner and the grass bank by the Beacon was required. It was agreed that Cllr Buttery would discuss the possibility for “grasscrete” in the corner and also to seek costs for flattening the area by the beacon so that it can be mowed more easily.

Action Cllr Buttery

3. Jack Verrall Memorial Gardens (JVMG) – to consider project

The Council discussed an extensive proposal from the Horticultural Society for work at the Memorial Gardens, comprising planting, clearance and other enhancements, together with regular maintenance. The Council noted that the 2024-5 budget for JVMG Renovation is £2000 in addition to the £500 budget annually for the hand mow and weeding.

The Clerk suggested that there is also a new grant fund available from Volitalia via Bizgive offering funding for community projects up to £5k, and it had been ascertained that work at JVMG would comply with the criteria. The details of the proposal would be discussed with the Horticultural Society together with Cllr Anderson and Cllr Dewdney who would report back to the Council in due course, noting that the deadline for applying for the funding is mid-November

Action Cllr Anderson, Cllr Dewdney

The Council also considered a request from resident to prohibit dogs from the Memorial Gardens due to the increased amount of mess. This would be possible when new signage is produced and the

residents would be advised in advance to explain the rationale behind the decision given the plans for greater use of the Gardens.

RESOLVED to prohibit dogs from the Jack Verrall Memorial Gardens

4. Cooksfield – to consider

Cllr Dewdney provided a review of the options for the use or disposal of this land in Sophurst Lane. together with a draft pre-app planning application. It was noted that a provider would be required should the Council wish to provide affordable housing and that enquiries concerning the providers currently working with TWBC should be made as well as ascertaining how many residents of the parish are on the housing register.

Action Cllr Dewdney

12. Cinderhill

1. Meeting re vandalism – to consider actions

Cllr Akenhead outlined the discussion with TWBC (Private Sector Housing and the Community Safety department) together with the Police concerning the increased vandalism and joyriding. KHWP had confirmed on a recent inspection that less than four saplings appear to be surviving at the newly planted woodland and the funders had been informed as well as TWBC. It was agreed that CCTV would not be appropriate.

2. Cinderhill year-end reports – to note

The Council received and noted Cinderhill Annual Report and KHWP report.

13. Diversion of Public Right of Way WT302 – to consider

The Council noted the formal notification of this change, having previously engaged with the landowner and given support for it to progress.

14. Clerk's report

1. Request for Memorial Bench on Matfield Green – to consider

The Council considered a request for a further Memorial Bench on Matfield Green, and noted the terms of the Council's Policy. It was agreed that the donating family would be allowed to replace the existing bench by the pond with a new one.

Action Clerk

2. Allotment tenancy extension to 5 years – to consider

The Council advised that currently the Allotment Tenancy agreement dictates that for residents outside of the Parish or those who take on a second plot, they are offered only a three year tenancy. This can mean that a new tenant from outside the parish is less inclined to take on a plot that needs considerable work as it can take a year to put right, then a year to get a crop so you only have one year left. We have currently 5 tenants with time limited tenancies and no one on the waiting list.

RESOLVED to increase the second plot/outside parish tenancies to 5 years initially followed by 3 years.

3. Damage outside Hatherleigh - to consider quotes

The Council reconsidered the damage to the verges outside Hatherleigh, Homecroft Cottage and the verge adjacent to Seymour Cottage from vehicles driving over the grass. The Council considered quotes for "grasscrete" but this was not felt to provide adequate remedy and the Clerk was asked to ensure they were filled with topsoil, topped with grass seed/turf and that heavy "anti-traffic" boulders positioned in a suitable way to deter the problem continuing. The Clerk had identified funding available via the UKPSF fund and would progress an application if criteria permitted this.

15. RFO's Report

1. Accounts payable

3095	HMRC	Tax and NI May 2024	£596.54
3075	C. Brooks	May mileage £59.40, Salary Balance £53.30	£112.70
3076	Grovehurst Plumbing	Emergency call to Toilets	£60.00
3077	Business Stream	Pond water Standing Order April	£17.84
3078	PWCAC	Grant as approved 13 May 2024	£2,000.00
3079	Homestart	Grant approved 13 May 2024	£250.00
3080	Brenchley Matfield Hall	Grant approved for dog waste bags	£300.00
3081	KBS Deport	Notice Board for Cinderhill	£937.20
3082	D. Izzard	Maintenance of JVMG April and May	£50.00

Payments by Credit Card for March expenditure

3083	Lloyds Multicard	Monthly fees April	£3.00
	B&Q	Tools for meter readings	£15.61

Standing Orders and Direct Debits for Information

3084	SO C. Brooks	Salary May 2024	£1,979.75
3085	SO Panetta Horn	Salary May 2024	£648.20
3086	DD Smart Pension	May Pension Payment	£788.05
3087	DD EDF Energy	Pavilion Electricity May 2024	£20.88
3088	DD Microshade	May data and application service	£201.22
3089	DD Business Stream	May 24 Pavilion water and waste	£43.00
3090	DD Smart Pension	May Pension admin fee	£26.40
3091	SO Churchill	May Toilet Cleaning services	£912.76
3092	SO Capel Groundcare	Playground Inspection Monthly premium April	£112.80
3093	SO Capel Groundcare	SIDs battery change, data download and movement between pole, April 2024	£164.67
3094	First Com Tec Works	Monthly Phone and Broadband Service May	£173.11

The RFO having provided invoices for scrutiny in advance, the accounts were approved for payment and would be authorised by Cllr Churchill and Cllr Buttery.

16. Meetings attended and reports by Councillors

None.

17. To be advised of urgent business

None.

18. Date of next meeting: Monday 1st July, 7pm, Matfield Pavilion

19. Co-option of new Members of the Parish Council – to consider applications

No members of the public being present the Chair invited Nina Thompson to detail her skills, experience and interest in joining the Council. She subsequently left the meeting and, per the Council's Co-Option Procedure the Council considered her application.

Cllr Anderson proposed the Co-Option of Nina Thompson and this was seconded by Cllr Churchill. The Council unanimously voted to appoint Nina Thompson to the Council.

The Council considered an application from Andrew Stout and his recent positive membership of the Council.

Cllr Dewdney proposed the Co-Option of Andrew Stout and this was seconded by Cllr Buttery. The Council unanimously voted to appoint Andrew Stout to the Council.

New Councillors would sign a Declaration of Acceptance of Office at the next opportunity and an induction session would be arranged.

The Clerk outlined that there remains one vacancy on the Parish Council which will be advertised in 3 months' time following a Casual Vacancy notice.